

CPR in Schools – Denise Busman RN, MSN

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Thank you Chairperson Pavlov for the opportunity to testify in today's hearing.

I am the Manager of Clinical Practice, Education and Quality for the Department of Cardiovascular Services for Spectrum Health in Grand Rapids Michigan. I also serve on the Science Advisory Task Force of AHA Mission: Lifeline and am the Cardiovascular Team Liaison-elect for the Michigan Chapter of the American College of Cardiology.

In my role at Spectrum Health, I direct our program to rapidly treat patients having a heart attack, which not uncommonly may also include a cardiac arrest. Unfortunately, while we can offer the entire gamut of services to fix a patient's heart, we can't fix a brain that has gone without oxygen following prolonged cardiac arrest *without* resuscitation.

Unlike some of the stories you will hear today, all too often bystanders fail to act. A Washington Post article in October 2015 noted that 70% of Americans feel helpless to act in a cardiac emergency because they don't know CPR or don't want to hurt the person.

Bystander panic and discomfort are the most common reasons why CPR is not initiated. However, once trained, the likelihood that a bystander will provide CPR in cardiac arrest situations is 6 times greater. And, the good news? Any CPR training has been shown to be a strong predictor of providing CPR up to 5 years later.

Survival rates in cardiac arrest vary by location. In communities with robust CPR education programs, it has been demonstrated that outcomes in cardiac arrest are significantly improved. This was true in North Carolina's HeartRescue project, where favorable neurologic outcomes improved by 37%.

Including CPR in school curriculums is a sound investment. The heartbreaking tragedy of watching someone die in front of you while you look helplessly on, carries a lifetime personal cost. The cost to the citizens of this state for both acute and long term care for permanently damaged hearts and brains is enormous.

On April 27, at a meeting of the Kent County Emergency Medical System's Quality committee, we reviewed 2015 data around treatment of cardiac arrest. In Kent County last year, 72% of all cardiac arrests occurred at home – much like it does in the rest of the country. 16% of the time, cardiac arrest occurred in a public setting – like the Capitol – or like it did a week ago, for a 60 year old woman at the Art Van Sports Complex just outside of Rockford. Fortunately for her, there was an off duty nurse and physician nearby that knew how to perform CPR and operate the AED.

But what if they hadn't been there? Would she have received the same type of immediate CPR and shock from the AED? With passage of a bill such as you have before you today, I think one of those kids on the ball field would have made sure she did.

Now that's a life skill.

Thank you.